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## ABSTRACT

The improvement of reading comprehension skills in a target group of at-risk students in the second grade of a North Florida school was achieved through the implementation strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning. At-home parent-child literacy interactions increased and parents became active role models in a Parent as Readers In School Program. Students engaged in collaborative listening, speaking, writing, reading and thinking activities. Positive cognitive growth was indicated by data comparison of two pre- and posttests: the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test, Level Two, and the comprehension skills sub-tests in the unit tests of the county adopted basal reading series. Data provided by parent surveys and the tabulation of weekly at-home reading time sheets indicated a substantial improvement in parent-child literacy interactions. The strategies, methods, and results were shared with the faculty of the target school and local community educators via a workshop. (Eleven figures of data are included; 23 references, survey instruments, self-esteem measures, a reading time sheet, and letters to parents are attached.)  
(Author/RS)

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ED359505

THE IMPROVEMENT OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS  
IN AT RISK SECOND GRADERS

by

Mary Ann V. Quigley

Final Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for Advancement  
of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a  
National Database System for reference.

June, 1993

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## Abstract - Final Report

Improvement of Reading Comprehension Skills in  
At-Risk Second Graders.

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The Center for the Advancement of Education.

Descriptors: Elementary Education/ Reading Comprehension/  
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The improvement of reading comprehension skills in a target group of at-risk students in the second grade was achieved through the implementation strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning. At-home parent-child literacy interactions increased and parents became active role models in a Parent as Readers In School Program. Students engaged in collaborative listening, speaking, writing, reading and thinking activities.

Positive cognitive growth was indicated by data comparison of two pre and post tests: The Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test: Level Two and the comprehension skills sub-tests in the unit tests of the county adopted basal reading series. Data provided by parent surveys and the tabulation of weekly at-home reading time sheets indicated a substantial improvement in parent-child literacy interactions.

The strategies, methods and results of this project will be shared with the faculty of the target school and local community educators via a workshop.

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## Chapter 1

### Purpose

#### Background

The school in which this study was implemented is one of 11 elementary schools (K-5) in a district on the east coast of North Florida. The original school building was erected 33 years ago and was designed to accommodate approximately 300 students. The construction of additional wings and a separate building had been a continual process from 1968 to 1988.

The current student enrollment is 623, of which 76.39 percent is White, non-Hispanic, 21.67 is Black, and 1.28 percent is Hispanic. According to the 1991-92 Florida School Report for this school the stability of the pupil population is reflected in a student mobility rate of 25.38 percent as contrasted to the district mobility rate of 15.82 percent. The percentage of students at this school who are eligible to receive free or reduced meals is almost double the district level.

According to parent survey results (less than half of families participated) most families fall within the \$10,000 to \$20,000 per annum income range.

The percentage of families eligible for free or reduced breakfast and lunch is almost double the county wide level. The number of students coming from homes in which parents are divorced, separated or single is significant. The guidance program provides counseling for students whose parents are deceased or in correctional institutions. According to the results of a 1991-92 school survey a significant number of parents have completed high school or had partial high school educations.

The philosophy of the faculty, staff and administration of the school is that the school should encourage each student to achieve personal and educational potential. The school should provide a friendly, wholesome and responsive atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning and productive living. The school's philosophy states students should be motivated and inspired to become useful and successful citizens. The integrated cross-curricular activities at this school focus on the whole student. Teachers strive to meet individual needs and modify or enrich the curriculum as much as possible.

The writer is currently teaching second grade and is

one of 26 classroom teachers. The writer is the teacher of the target class and will be directly involved in the implementation of this project. Administration consists of one principal and a part-time assistant principal. Resource personnel includes a full time guidance counselor, a media specialist, an art teacher, a music teacher, a physical education teacher, a specific learning disabilities teacher, a speech pathologist and two Chapter I Reading teachers.



### Problem Statement

The ability to read is critical for success in and out of school. This reality is supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). According to NAEYC the appropriate goals of a literacy program are for children to enhance their ability to communicate verbally and through reading and writing, and to enjoy these activities. (NAEYC, 1989: 10) The way reading is experienced and taught is crucial to the development of actively literate adults.

According to Davidson (1988) as stated in the 1985 report of the National Institute of Education, "Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the Commission on Reading", the most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children (Anderson et al., 1985). This report also stated that consistent positive parental involvement in children's literacy development is vital.

A rich literacy environment with meaningful and functional experiences is necessary for children to

become active adult readers. Adults must model literate behavior. Pre-reading experiences and the home literacy atmosphere influence children's literacy development. Greaney (1986) suggests children from working class homes are often in literacy-poor environments. Parental modeling and involvement benefit a child's development and self-esteem.

Social interaction is also a vital component in literacy experiences. Slavin (1988) reported that children acquire knowledge through cooperative learning and that all important progress and learning happen within the framework of collaborative activity. The positive attitudes and motivation of children may be decreased by excessive academic competition and or comparison.

A healthy self esteem is crucial for academic success and pro-social behavior. Children who have not experienced positive peer interactions are likely to become dropout candidates. Self-esteem, attitudes, motivation and happy interactive experiences are critical factors that affect literacy development (NAEYC, 1989).

The focus of this study was directed to one of four second grade classes, consisting of 22 students. Approximately 64 percent or 14 students of the class completed kindergarten at this school. The other students or 36 percent of the class were out of state, out of district or within the district transfers. Of the 22 students in the target class 12 have been previously retained and two of the 12 have been retained twice. Eleven of the 22 students have been served by Chapter I. Eight of the 22 students in the target class were participants in Chapter I services for the 1992-93 school year. Thirteen students of the target class had been screened by the Prep Specialist (in grades K-2) with two to six difficulties in the areas of visual motor, visual perception, visual memory, auditory perception, auditory discrimination, conceptual or social emotional. Three students received specific learning disabilities support in the areas of reading and language arts.

The target group was composed of ten students, seven males and three females, ages seven and a half to nine. The problem, based on information collected by administering the Silver-Burdett Ginn Unit tests and the

Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test, was that only 30 percent of the target group was able to read on a second grade level. In the ideal situation 100 percent should be able to read on a second grade level. There existed a 70 percent discrepancy between the percentage of students who were able to read on a second grade level and the percentage of students who should have been able to read on a second grade level.

The problem was that seven students in the target group of ten students were not able to achieve passing grades in reading on a second grade level. Ideally, all students in the target group should be able to read on a second grade level and receive passing reading grades. Through the implementation strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning the researcher endeavored to affect a change in the current academic situation of the seven students.

During the 1992-93 school year 70 percent of the target group had received unsatisfactory grades in reading on progress reports. The other 30 percent had either repeated second grade or had repeated first grade. A review of student records indicated a retention rate within the target group of 80 percent. Two students in the target group had already been retained twice. A Screening Committee, composed of the principal, the guidance counselor, the Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) teacher, a Chapter I teacher and several representative classroom teachers, had been established to assist the teacher in planning and implementing educational alternatives for individual students who were not making satisfactory progress in the areas of academic, behavioral or emotional growth.

Eight students were currently enrolled in the Chapter I program and all participated in Chapter I last year. A review of 1992 Stanford Achievement Test results indicated three students out of ten had a stanine of five and seven students in the target group had stanines of four or less: four students out of ten had a stanine of four, two students out of ten had a stanine of three and

one student out of ten had a stanine of two. PREP records indicated 70 percent of the target group had auditory, visual or social-emotional problems. Five students in the target group had experienced divorce, separation or chronic family problems. A review of the 1991-92 final reading grades for the target group showed six of the ten received unsatisfactory grades, three students received a grade of C and one student received a grade of B. The four students that received passing final grades were all first grade repeaters.

In interviewing first and second grade teachers many factors were addressed as possibly contributing to the problem. Minimal or inconsistent parental involvement, lack of support staff, student immaturity and low self esteem were the common factors stated by all the teachers.

The reading comprehension scores of 70 percent of the target group were below grade level expectations. Factors such as minimal parent-child literacy interaction, lack of parental literacy modeling, insufficient school support personnel, and student immaturity manifested by inappropriate behaviors may have

been supportive elements of the problem.

The writer endeavored to increase comprehension skills of the second graders in the target group by parent-teacher cooperation and cooperative learning. Through parent-teacher interventions and cooperative learning students' self-esteem were positively affected as a result of improved comprehension skills.

Outcome Objectives

1. After participation in a 12 week project, more than 50 percent of the students increased reading comprehension skills by one letter grade. This was measured by the Silver-Burdett-Ginn Unit Tests and the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test.
2. After participation in a 12 week project, more than 50 percent of the students increased leisure reading time with parental involvement. A comparison of data supplied by an initial parent survey and the tabulation of the number of at-home parent-child literacy interactions indicated positive change in the home literacy environment.
3. After participation in a 12 week program 100 percent of the students showed a positive gain in self-esteem. This was measured by data collected from pre and post student self-esteem scales and self-concept profile inventories.



## Chapter II

### Research and Solution Strategy

#### Research

The researcher believes cooperative learning positively effects student self-esteem. Students that are given the opportunity to establish individual uniqueness, make contributions towards a group goal, and receive peer affirmation are very likely to be happy and productive individuals. The researcher believes happy students with a healthy self-esteem strive for academic success. Collaborative learning enhances self-esteem and thus, promotes academic success.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children Position Statement on Appropriate Education in the Primary Grades (1989) collaborative learning is a developmentally appropriate practice. Collaborative learning enhances academic progress and enables children to develop and practice social skills. NAEYC stressed the importance of children acquiring information in a meaningful context and its relationship to conceptual development. NAEYC also

emphasized the need for collaborative experiences to foster the development of student self-esteem. NAEYC considers parents as co-educators in the educational process. Parental involvement is recognized to be of primary importance.

Slavin (1988) reported collaborative student team learning organizational plans yielded a significantly higher achievement success rate as compared to traditionally taught classes. In 33 out of 44 studies academic achievement was greater in classes implementing collaborative learning organizational plans.

Madden is a staunch supporter of collaborative learning. Madden is of the opinion that collaborative reading teams can help poor readers achieve success. Collaborative learning, according to Madden (1988), demands a dual role of the participants. One role is a content, or task oriented role, while the other is a process, or pro-social functioning role. Internal motivation is subsequently generated through cooperative endeavors as students experience fun, peer recognition, and self-appreciation.

Johnson et al. (1984) reported that collaborative learning has a positive impact on the cognitive and

affective domains of students. Through the review of research reports Johnson et al. found collaborative learning resulted in higher academic achievement and increased pro-social behavior as contrasted with independent or competitive organizational strategies.

Anderson and Lapp (1988) suggest student achievement is improved when collaborative learning is used as the organizational plan. The researchers reported students learned better when cooperation, not competition, was stressed.

According to Duffy and Roehler (1986) collaborative learning is utilized as an effective organizational strategy to improve student abilities and attitudes towards reading. The researchers recommend cooperative reading, discussion and writing activities to enhance student achievement.

Kentucky's Primary Program (1993) includes state regulations and recommended best practices. A critical component of this state mandated transformation process is positive parent involvement. Positive parent involvement is recognized to be a prime factor in the academic success and the development of self-esteem in children. Included in the recommended best practices

involving parent participation is the development or enhancement of an appropriately enriched home literacy environment in which parents serve as literacy models and also actively participate in literacy interactions with children.

Franklin reported that in research studies of parent-child home literacy interactions, Crago (1983) and White (1984) found that the children involved in the research study questioned the researchers about themes and conflicts presented in stories parents read to them at home. This research suggested that the children were actively engaged in the reading process.

Miller (1986), according to Johnston, reported an increase of six times the normal rate of comprehension gain by students involved in a six to eight week parent-child at-home oral reading project.

In a research study, Boss and Powell (1991) found that parental involvement in literacy experiences resulted in improved student attitudes toward reading and had a positive impact on parents.

Reynolds (1991), quoting Stevenson and Baker (1987), indicated parental involvement is absolutely correlated with student academic achievement.

According to Handel (1991) The Partnership for Family Reading in New Jersey is one of many national programs committed to breaking the cycle of intergenerational literacy problems. This program was designed to stimulate parent-student-teacher literacy interactions and encourage active parental involvement in literacy experiences at home. Adult workshops are provided to improve adult reading skills and reading attitudes so that the adults may transmit these experiences to the children.

Included among the reported successful results were increased home literacy interactions, the enhanced quality of adult literacy experiences, student excitement, and the acquisition of enhanced self-esteem by parents and children. The break in the cycle of intergenerational literacy problems has been successfully achieved by this program.

According to Johnston (1989), Bartlett, Hall and Neale (1984) reported that improved student reading skills was the result of a six week project which involved parents as active participants in at-home literacy interactions with the target group of children.

Bergman (1992) reported the successful

implementation of a reading comprehension program called Students Achieving Independent Learning (SAIL). Founded on the strategies recommended by Palincsar and Brown (1984) and Brown, Armbruster and Baker (1986), SAIL's instructional practices generate student involvement in summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting skills. Metacognition is also a vital element in the SAIL success story. Bergman reports that student awareness and student use of strategies increase student comprehension.

Students in the SAIL program are trained to ask questions as material is read. The self-questioning process verified understanding. Questions range in levels but all responses require metacognitive justification. SAIL students have been trained in problem solving strategies to be employed when decoding or comprehension problems occur. The problem solving strategies are comparable to the recommended sixth strategy, adapting resources, of Pearson. Bergman reports SAIL students viewed themselves as good readers and, moreover, enjoyed the reading program. Bergman also reported Chapter I student test scores of SAIL participants greatly increased.

Angeletti (1991) found teacher modeling, class discussions and the strategic use of cooperative groups involved in reading and writing resulted in the targeted population of second and fifth graders becoming more confident and successful readers and writers. Angeletti noted the target group progressed from basic retelling stages to the higher level evaluation stage through the implementation strategies of teacher modeling, class discussion and various cooperative group activities.

According to Garcia and Pearson (1990), Pearson, Dole, Duffy and Roehler have recommended several strategies to be implemented during classroom comprehension instruction. The strategies were derived from research studies relating to the nature of expert reading. The recommended strategies require active metacognitive processes by the reader. Included in the enumerated strategies are importance determination, synthesis, inference, questioning, comprehension, self-monitoring, and adapting resources. All strategies demand energy and thought of the reader. The strategies involve basic retell tasks, summarizing, reorganizing, self-questioning on many levels, and reader realization of comprehension lapse and finally, the recognition and

utilization of appropriate ways to fill in the gap.

Students taught to summarize, question, clarify, and predict will be able to construct meaning from what has been read. As part of a reciprocal teaching approach the four strategies generate cohesiveness in the development of comprehension skills, according to Palincsar and Brown (1984, 1986), as reported by Garcia and Pearson.

According to Smith (1989), Howell and Sylvester (1983) concur that oral reading is beneficial. During a ten week after school read-aloud-program, Howell and Sylvester reported the targeted group of reluctant readers became more interested in reading. Student decoding skills improved and reading skills were strengthened.

Daily oral reading practice benefits the reader in several positive ways. Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) report that, according to Fielding, Wilson and Anderson (1984) there is a direct relationship between reading progress and the amount of time spent on personal reading. Reading fluency and comprehension skills are strengthened because the emphasis has shifted from decoding to comprehension.

Glazar and Searfoss (1988) state prediction is an



important element in the comprehension of material. The successful reader takes educated guesses, predicts and anticipates appropriately.

The benefits of consistent oral reading have been stated by Dowhower (1987). Dowhower reported that after five re-reading practice sessions using second grade reading material there was a comprehension increase from 66 percent to 88 percent on unpracticed passages by the target group. Dowhower concurs oral reading directly effects comprehension improvement.

### Solution Strategy

The solution strategy chosen to improve reading comprehension skills in second graders was based upon the National Association for the Education of Young Children Position Statement on Appropriate Education in the Primary Grades (1989). The researcher believed that a program enriched by collaborative activities and parental involvement would improve the reading comprehension abilities of students. The researcher attempted to improve the comprehension skills of the target group, promote home literacy interactions and enhance student self-esteem through a program called Collaborative Learning Involving Children and Kin (CLICK). CLICK insured collaborative student activities and parent-child interaction in school and at home.

Parents were asked to volunteer as Parent Readers in school. Parent Readers read to the target group on a weekly basis. Parents were also encouraged to enrich the home literacy environment, serve as literacy models, and participate in literacy interactions at home with the children.

The researcher believed that by creating a

partnership of children and parents to increase reading comprehension skills, all participants would benefit through involvement in CLICK. Parents viewed their role as paramount for their children's reading success and children increased comprehension skills and developed social skills and self-esteem. Finally, the researcher facilitated the increase of reading comprehension skills through worthwhile and enjoyable activities.

## Chapter III

### Method

This research project was implemented over a twelve week period and was divided into three phases. During this time frame data was gathered to indicate any changes in student comprehension skills, parent-child literacy interactions, and any changes in the students' self-concept.

The target group was composed of ten students, ages seven and a half to nine. Eight of the ten students had been retained previously. Seven out of the ten students were unable to achieve passing grades in reading on a second grade level based upon information collected by the Silver-Burdett Ginn Unit tests and the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test. Through the implementation strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning the researcher endeavored to affect a change in the current academic situation of the seven students.

Phase one (weeks one-three) included the target group's creation of Student Self-Esteem Troll Scales,

(Appendix D : 54), completion of the Student Self-Concept Profile Inventory, (Appendix E : 55), and the Hunter-Grundin Reading of Meaning Test as a pre-test (Appendix C: 53). Parent-Child Home Reading Fun Time Sheets (Appendix F: 56) were distributed and relative data were collected on a weekly basis. Collaborative activities to strengthen listening, speaking, reading and writing skills were engaged in by the target group. The Parent as Readers Program commenced and the in-class library for parents opened. Students in the target group utilized the public library on a rotating schedule accompanied by the researcher.

Phase two (weeks four-seven) continued all student collaborative tasks and parental involvement activities. The researcher modeled graphic organizers, predictive thinking skills and levels of questioning. Students engaged in critical thinking and questioning skill practice. Collaborative tasks to increase comprehension and critical thinking skills were further developed. Data was gathered via Silver-Burdett-Ginn Unit Tests, cooperative task quality, student interaction, student self-evaluation, researcher observation and the collection of at home reading time sheets.

Phase three (weeks eight-twelve) continued activities in phases one and two. During the third phase students produced a video program and team-written books. The students designed a survey relative to the video program. Students analyzed survey data.

During the final week of phase three the students recreated the Self-Esteem Troll Scales (Appendix D: 54), and completed the post implementation Student Self-Concept Profile Inventory, (Appendix E: 55). Parents completed the post-implementation Home Literacy Survey, (Appendix A: 51). The Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test was re-administered to the students. These indicators were used as summative instruments. A comparison of pre-post data was made to determine the success of the implemented interventions.

### Timeline For Comprehension Improvement

#### Preparation

A home literacy environment survey was sent home (Appendix A: 51). The parent letters regarding a meeting were sent home (Appendix B: 52). At this meeting the researcher presented an overview of the practicum project and the importance of parental involvement was a major focus. The researcher encouraged parental literacy modeling, parent-child literacy interactions and participation in the Parent as Readers Program. The researcher supported parent confidence by modeling questioning skills. A brief explanation of questioning levels was presented. Parents were also encouraged to use the in-class parent library and take advantage of the opportunities to utilize specific videos to enhance the home literacy environment.

The researcher contacted the district adult literacy program, Learn to Read, and plans for implementing a pen-pal program were established.

Second grade students met kindergarten and fourth grade buddy readers. At these separate social

interactions refreshments were offered to all children.

### Week One

The researcher administered the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test as the pre-test (Appendix C: 53).

The students made Self-Esteem Troll Scales (Appendix D: 54).

The students completed the Self-Esteem Profile Inventory (Appendix E: 55). The students began oral reading to kindergartners on a one to one basis once a week for 15 minutes each session. Extra time for in-class recreational reading was provided for the students.

The students began a pen-pal correspondence with the district adult literacy program, Learn to Read.

A weekly Home Reading Book-Time Sheet was sent home (Appendix F: 56). Students were offered incentives to encourage nightly literacy interactions with parents.

A letter to parents explaining the new in-class library for parents was sent home (Appendix G: 57).



Week Two

Each student was read to by a fourth grade student once a week for 20 minutes a session.

The students began collaborative vocabulary activities. The students began shared oral reading and retell activities.

Permission slips for after school library visits were sent home.

Students began utilization of the public library accompanied by the researcher.

Week Three

The Parent as Readers Program began.

Students began daily personal journaling.

Students began response activities to literature.

Week Four

The researcher modeled graphic organizers and the students collaboratively practiced graphic organizer aids.

The researcher modeled predictive thinking skills.

Students practiced predicting story outcomes and/or character actions in the basal reader or in literature.

Week Five

The students engaged in team story writing activities. Student teams made predictions as peer student teams shared their stories.

Week Six

The students began team book writing projects utilizing graphic organizers.

Students shared team books with kindergartners, grade four students and parents.

Students planned and implemented ideas for a book sharing festival in which student team-books were shared with the school and parents.

Week Seven

The researcher modeled questioning skills.

The researcher assisted students in developing questioning skills.

Discussions of literature selections commenced. Students continued to practice questioning skills. Students continued to practice evaluative thinking in response to peer asked questions relating to the literature selections.

Week Eight

The researcher brainstormed with the students to plan a video program with a book review as a format.

The students experimented with the various format ideas. The students continued to practice evaluative thinking and questioning skills.

Week Nine

The students produced a book review video.

The students critiqued the program with assistance from the researcher.

Students formulated questions for a peer survey relating to the book review video. Students composed a survey questionnaire about the video program.

Week Ten

The students shared the video with their classmates.

The students distributed the peer survey. Survey results were tabulated, analyzed and discussed by the target group of students with researcher assistance.

The video program was shared with family members. Video program copies were also distributed for family viewing at home.

The student produced video program was shared with the school.

#### Week Eleven

The book sharing festival occurred. Family members and the entire school population was invited to enjoy and celebrate the student team books.

#### Week Twelve

The researcher administered the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test as a posttest.

The students remade the Self-Esteem Troll Scales (Appendix D: 46).

The students completed the post Self-Esteem Profile Inventory (Appendix E: 47).

Parents who volunteered for the Parents as Readers Program received acknowledgements from the children and the researcher.

### Parent Resources

At a special parent meeting the researcher presented an overview of the research project and the importance of parental involvement. The researcher encouraged parent participation in literacy modeling, parent-child literacy interactions, and participation in the Parent as Readers Program. The researcher supported parents confidence by modeling graphic organizers, questioning levels and skills. Parents were encouraged to use the parent library and take advantage of the opportunities to utilize specific videos to enhance the home literacy environment. At the practicum's culmination parents were asked to assess the various parental involvement activities and the usefulness of the teacher modeling workshop.

### School Resources

The 12 week practicum implementation period targeted 10 second grade students. The setting for the implementation phase was the target classroom and the drama room in the school. Activities were collaborative by nature. Approximately 90 minutes, five days a week were allocated for reading comprehension

improvement activities.

The researcher provided direct instruction for the students. Parent as Readers also provided supportive instructional roles for the target group.

A kindergarten class provided oral reading experiences for the target group once a week for 15 minutes a session. A fourth grade class provided listening experiences for the target group once a week for 20 minutes a session.

#### Monitoring- Mid-Term Evaluation

Progress was monitored at approximately 4 week intervals. Assessment of student responses, needs, and progress was reflected in mid-course adjustments. On going parental contact with the researcher provided additional input. Direct researcher observations, student-researcher interaction and researcher judgement was used to assess student progress.

The practicum advisor and mentor were consulted on the progression of the practicum project.

## Chapter IV

### Results

Student	Pre Test Score	Post Test Score
1	42	67
2	75	96
3	75	98
4	55	87
5	42	80
6	55	87
7	67	71
8	80	98
9	53	moved
10	56	moved

Figure 1

#### Hunter-Grundin Literacy Profiles Reading for Meaning Mastery Test Scores: Level Two

The Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test: Level Two was utilized as a pre and post test. The Hunter-Grundin instrument is a cloze test in array form that is given in an accurately timed ten minute period. The target group took this test in a group setting in both pre and post test situations. Results indicated overall radical improvement in test scores.

Student	Score Comparison	Percent Comparison
1	+ 25	+ 59%
2	+ 21	+ 28%
3	+ 23	+ 31%
4	+ 32	+ 58%
5	+ 38	+ 90%
6	+ 32	+ 58%
7	+ 04	+ 06%
8	+ 18	+ 23%
9	moved	-
10	moved	-

Figure 2

Hunter-Grundin Literacy Profiles  
Reading for Meaning Mastery  
Test Score Comparison



Student	Pre Implementation	Post Implementation
1	60	90
2	80	90
3	80	90
4	40	80
5	60	100
6	60	90
7	20	90
8	80	100
9	60	moved
10	60	moved

Figure 3

Silver-Burdett-Ginn Unit Test  
Pre and Post Implementation  
Comparison Sub-Test Scores

Data provided by the comprehension section of the unit tests in the district adopted basal reading series also indicated positive academic achievement results. The comprehension skills sub-test score was used rather than the complete unit test score because the total unit test score includes sub-test scores, as spelling, which are not critical to comprehension.

Student	Score Comparison	Percent Comparison
1	+ 30	50%
2	+ 10	12 1/2%
3	+ 10	12 1/2%
4	+ 40	100%
5	+ 40	100%
6	+ 30	50%
7	+ 70	350%
8	+ 20	100%
9	moved	-
10	moved	-

Figure 4

Silver-Burdett-Ginn Unit Tests  
Comparison Sub Test  
Score Comparison

Student	Pre-Implementation	Post-Implementation
1	F	C
2	C	B
3	C	B
4	F	C
5	D	B
6	D	B
7	D	B
8	B	B
9	D	moved
10	D	moved

Figure 5

Pre and Post Implementation  
Progress Report Grades

The implementation strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning facilitated academic improvement in the target group of at-risk students. The researcher utilized the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test, the basal reader comprehension sub-test scores, collaborative learning task quality and direct researcher observation as basis for progress report grades.

student	Growth
1	+ 2
2	+ 1
3	+ 1
4	+ 2
5	+ 2
6	+ 2
7	+ 2
8	0
9	moved
10	moved

Figure 6

Comparison of Student Pre-Post Implementation  
Progress Report Letter Grades in  
Numerical Growth

Student	Pre-Implementation	Post-Implementation
1	3	4
2	1	2
3	0	0
4	2	4
5	3	5
6	1	3
7	3	5
8	1	4
9	0	moved
10	1	moved

Figure 7

Student Leisure Reading Time With Parental Involvement  
Comparison of Pre-Post Implementation Data  
Number of Books Read Weekly

Student	Difference	Growth Percentage
1	1	+ 33%
2	1	+ 100%
3	0	0%
4	2	+ 100%
5	2	+ 67 %
6	2	+ 200%
7	2	+ 67%
8	3	+ 300%
9	moved	-
10	moved	-

Figure 8

Student Learning Reading With Parental Involvement  
Comparison of Pre-Post Implementation Data  
Difference and Percentage of Growth

A comparison of data supplied by an initial parent survey and the tabulation of the number of weekly at-home parent-child literacy interactions indicated positive change in the home literacy environment. The initial parent survey ascertained the number of books parents read to children on a weekly basis. The parent-child weekly reading time sheets were returned every Monday. Data tabulation indicated an overall positive change in parental involvement.

student	Strengths	Weaknesses
1	2	3
2	4	1
3	3	2
4	3	2
5	2	3
6	4	1
7	1	4
8	0	5
9	4	1
10	2	3

Figure 9

#### Analysis of Pre-Implementation Student Self-Esteem Troll Scales Strengths and Weaknesses

Comparative data analysis provided by the Student Self-Esteem Troll Scales indicated a positive change in student self-esteem. Students were requested to copy each of the following abilities on a troll held sign:

- \* knowing most words in my reader
- \* being able to read most words in my library books
- \* reading out loud
- \* knowing answers to story questions
- \* writing stories

Students were asked to identify each sign as either a personal strength or weakness by writing good or not good in each troll's hair. The children then colored the troll characters.

Student	Strengths	Weaknesses
1	5	0
2	5	0
3	5	0
4	4	1
5	5	0
6	5	0
7	4	1
8	4	1
9	moved	-
10	moved	-

Figure 10

Analysis of Post-Implementation Student Self-Esteem Troll Scales  
Strengths and Weaknesses



Student	Strengths	Weaknesses
1	+ 3	- 3
2	+ 1	- 1
3	+ 2	- 2
4	+ 1	- 1
5	+ 3	- 3
6	+ 1	- 1
7	+ 3	- 3
8	+ 4	- 4
9	moved	-
10	moved	-

Figure 11

Comparison of Student Self-Esteem Troll Scales  
Pre and Post Implementation  
Strengths and Weaknesses

The targeted students recreated the Self-Esteem Troll Scale during the final week of the practicum. A pre and post implementation comparative student self-evaluation analysis was made. Results indicated a positive change in student self-esteem.

### Evaluation Summary

A comparative analysis of pre and post data indicated the successful accomplishment of the researcher's objectives. The reading comprehension skills of at-risk second graders improved. Parental involvement in literacy interactions increased. The targeted students showed a positive gain in self-esteem. The intervention strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning facilitated the achievement of objectives.

The researcher concluded parental involvement and collaborative learning facilitated the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of the target group based on data analysis of pre and post implementation tests. The posttest results of the Hunter-Grundin Reading for Meaning Test and the comprehension skills sub-test of the Silver-Burdett-Ginn Unit Tests indicated an improvement in reading comprehension skills. Student post-implementation report cards also reflected the improvement of the reading comprehension skills of the target group.

Parental involvement in at-home literacy interactions also increased. A pre and post

implementation data analysis indicated a positive change in the home literacy environment. Pre-implementation survey data were compared to periodical data ascertained during the implementation period. The results indicated an increase in parent-child at-home literacy interactions.

A pre and post implementation comparative student self-evaluation analysis indicated a positive change in student self-esteem. In the pre and post implementation periods students identified personal strengths and weaknesses. A positive change in student self-esteem was indicated by an overall increase in student identification of personal weaknesses. The researcher, therefore, concluded that the utilization of parental involvement and collaborative learning as intervention strategies facilitated the improvement of reading comprehension skills in the target group of second graders.

## Chapter V

### Recommendations

The improvement of reading comprehension skills in the target group of at-risk students was achieved by employing the intervention strategies of parental involvement and collaborative learning. Educators in similar situations, in which a high percentage of students fail to meet grade level expectations, will be able to utilize the identical strategies, replicate methods and affect positive results.

The researcher intends to present strategies, implementation methods and findings to the target school faculty early next semester. The researcher will offer an in-service workshop to interested faculty members. Invitations to the presentation and workshop will be extended to the Adult Literacy Program, the Chapter One Coordinator and the District Supervisor of Elementary Education. Private schools in town will also be invited to the presentation and in-service workshop. The researcher will also present an overview of strategies, implementation methods and findings at a Parent-Teacher-

Organization Meeting early next semester. This presentation will provide insight, education and encouragement to parents and primary care-givers.

The researcher recommends that the parent library be housed in a location other than the targeted classroom. This alternative location will provide a more relaxed and comfortable environment for parent library users. The writer further suggests that the parent library schedule be expanded. The author believes these recommendations will enhance the use of the parent library. The writer also recommends that interested educators investigate the availability of grant monies to support home-school literacy partnership endeavors.

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## APPENDICES



Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am completing coursework for my Master's Degree in Elementary Education. I would appreciate your assistance in completing the survey about your home literacy environment. This survey is not for judgemental purposes. Any response is fine. I truly appreciate your helping me in this course.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Quigley

1. My child frequently sees me reading newspapers, magazines or books or anything in print. YES NO
2. I think parents can influence a child's reading attitude. YES NO
3. On the average about how many books do you and your child read together for fun each week? \_\_\_\_\_
4. About how often do you take your child to the public library? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. About how often do you purchase a new book for your child? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you currently subscribing to any child's magazine for your child?  
YES NO

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Next Thursday, Feb. 25, at 7:00 p.m. I am having a meeting for parents in our classroom. This meeting will be relevant to your child's language arts program.

I will present an overview of several things you'll find informative, helpful and exciting! I hope to see you in your child's classroom next Thursday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m.

Thank you for your interest and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Quigley

-----  
Please check one response:

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend the classroom meeting on Feb. 25th at 7:00 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to attend that evening, but can meet with you on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock.

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_



# Literacy Assessment Corporation

Consultants: Elizabeth Hunter-Grundin, Ph. D. Hans U. Grundin, Ph. D.

---

P. O. Box 989

Clearwater, FL 34617

Tel. 813 - 461 1506

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April 3, 1993

Mary Ann Quigley  
539 Gentian Road  
St. Augustine, FL 32086

Dear Ms. Quigley:

**Permission to include test copy in Practicum**

This is just to confirm our agreement on the phone today, namely that we are happy to grant you permission to enclose a copy of our *Level 2 Reading-for-Meaning Test*, "Baba Yaga the Witch" as an appendix to your Practicum submitted to Nova University.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hans U. Grundin', written over a horizontal line.

Hans U. Grundin

## Hunter/Grundin Literacy Profiles Reading for Meaning: Level Two

School and Class: .....

Student's Name: .....

Today's Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Student's Birth Date: ..... / ..... / .....

No. correct answers: .....

National Percentile Value: .....



### Baba Yaga , the Witch

Once upon a time there \_\_\_\_\_ told  
 \_\_\_\_\_ liked a very wicked  
 \_\_\_\_\_ lived  
 \_\_\_\_\_ found

\_\_\_\_\_ cried  
 witch \_\_\_\_\_ went Baba Yaga . She was a \_\_\_\_\_ have  
 \_\_\_\_\_ hoped \_\_\_\_\_ tall  
 \_\_\_\_\_ called \_\_\_\_\_ lived  
 \_\_\_\_\_ found

thin witch .

## Baba Yaga, the Witch

Once upon a time there lived a very wicked witch called

Baba Yaga . She was a tall , thin witch with ☐ began  
☐ black ☐ very eyes  
☐ alone

and long yellow ☐ trees ☐ but  
☐ turns ☐ can  
☐ teeth . When she went out ☐ sat  
☐ sleep ☐ she

always wore a black ☐ eyes  
☐ teeth and a tall hat . The  
☐ dress  
☐ feet

☐ nail ☐ after  
☐ little ☐ alone  
☐ tree Baba Yaga lived all ☐ again in an old  
☐ witch ☐ away

wood      ☐ eye                                      ☐ behind  
         ☐ time                                      ☐ middle  
         ☐ hide      which stood in the      ☐ time      of a  
         ☐ cabin                                      ☐ away

dark forest .      ☐ She                                      ☐ but  
                         ☐ So                                      ☐ when  
                         ☐ The      sharpened her yellow teeth      ☐ ever  
                         ☐ For                                      ☐ with

a rusty nail file .      ☐ Said  
                                 ☐ There  
                                 ☐ Away      told scary stories  
                                 ☐ People

about      ☐ her                                      ☐ wicked  
                 ☐ and                                      ☐ liked  
                 ☐ him      , and said that she      ☐ yellow      to  
                 ☐ was                                      ☐ cried

eat children for her      ☐ brother  
                                 ☐ breakfast  
                                 ☐ frightened      . One day a boy  
                                 ☐ children

☐ counted                                      ☐ forest  
☐ called                                      ☐ cabin  
☐ tired      Peter and his little      ☐ sister      Cindy were  
☐ would                                      ☐ whisper

playing hide and ☐ seek ☐ Peter's  
☐ turn ☐ always  
☐ deep in the forest . It was ☐ playing  
☐ tree ☐ wooden

turn to run away and ☐ cry  
☐ laugh and Cindy's turn to  
☐ hope  
☐ hide

☐ live ☐ him  
☐ stand ☐ in  
☐ find him . She counted slowly ☐ to twenty and  
☐ could ☐ a

began to ☐ think ☐ where  
☐ look ☐ behind  
☐ laugh for Peter . She looked ☐ until  
☐ hide ☐ their

trees , bushes and rocks , ☐ living  
☐ hiding to find her brother  
☐ trying  
☐ falling

☐ said ☐ him  
☐ down she could not see ☐ her  
☐ but ☐ who anywhere .  
☐ them ☐ them





asked the ☐ brother ☐ her  
☐ voice ☐ all  
☐ sister if she had seen Peter ☐ who  
☐ witch ☐ she

was lost in the ☐ sister  
☐ forest  
☐ witch . The wicked witch laughed  
☐ teeth

☐ asleep ☐ bony  
☐ after ☐ very  
☐ again , held out her thin , ☐ fat hand , and  
☐ about ☐ some

whispered in her ☐ next  
☐ ugly  
☐ tall voice , " Come with me .  
☐ feeling

☐ They ☐ brother  
☐ He ☐ sister  
☐ I will take you to your ☐ water . "  
☐ You ☐ forest

Baba Yaga took Cindy ☐ to  
☐ of  
☐ at the hand and led her  
☐ by

\_\_\_ brother  
 \_\_\_ farther  
 \_\_\_ after  
 \_\_\_ sister

into the forest . At last

\_\_\_ had  
 \_\_\_ and  
 \_\_\_ they  
 \_\_\_ he

\_\_\_ forest  
 \_\_\_ witch  
 \_\_\_ rock  
 \_\_\_ cabin

arrived at the old , and Cindy was told to

\_\_\_ return  
 \_\_\_ stay  
 \_\_\_ leave  
 \_\_\_ wonder

inside while the witch

\_\_\_ went  
 \_\_\_ told  
 \_\_\_ were  
 \_\_\_ saw

to get

\_\_\_ believed  
 \_\_\_ searched  
 \_\_\_ wondered  
 \_\_\_ trembled

Peter . Cindy if she would ever

\_\_\_ hide  
 \_\_\_ look  
 \_\_\_ see  
 \_\_\_ escape

\_\_\_ found  
 \_\_\_ scared  
 \_\_\_ returned  
 \_\_\_ thought

Peter again . When Baba Yaga , she

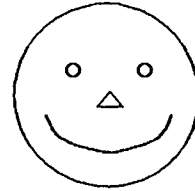
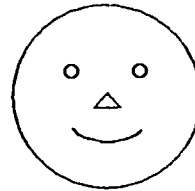
\_\_\_ sure  
 \_\_\_ empty  
 \_\_\_ bony  
 \_\_\_ black

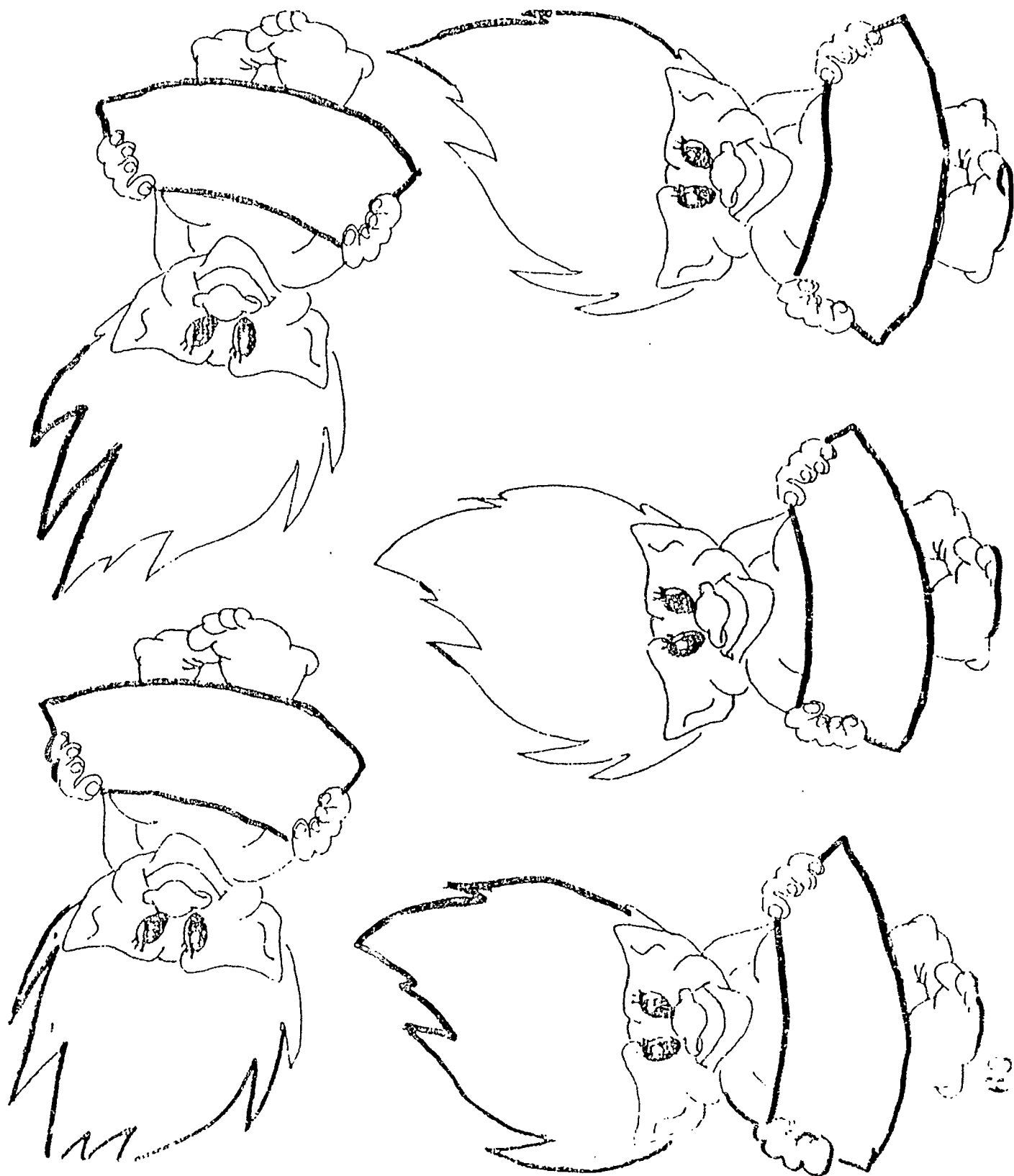
was carrying a big pot full of water .

Watching Baba Yaga    ☐ finding  
                                 ☐ placing    the pot over the  
                                 ☐ catching  
                                 ☐ hoping

☐ table  
☐ door        , poor Cindy trembled with fear .  
☐ wall  
☐ fire

*How did you feel about doing this ?*  
*Mark the face that shows how you felt ?*





## Student Self Concept Survey

1. Do you like to be in class? yes no
2. I like it when my parents \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I am proud of myself when \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. I wish I could do better in \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. I am good at \_\_\_\_\_
6. I am not good at \_\_\_\_\_
7. I wish my parents \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. I feel sad when \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## PARENT/ CHILD HOME READING FUN-TIME SHEET

DATE	DAY	MINUTES GIVEN TO YOUR CHILD	BOOK TITLE
------	-----	--------------------------------	------------

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I have set up a free lending library for parents in our classroom.. I hope you'll feel free to come in and browse. The scheduled hours for this parent library will be Wednesday 7:30-8:20 a.m., and Friday 2:30-3:15 p.m.

If you are unable to make it to school to pick up a book, I'll be glad to send one home in a sealed envelope via your child. Just let me know of your selection. Once again, thank you for your interest and cooperation!

Enclosed is a listing of a few books I have enjoyed. These will be on the parent library shelves in our classroom.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Quigley

Children's Hospital	by Peggy Anderson	On Wings of Eagles	by Ken Follet
Plains of Passage	by Jean Auel	Cardinal Virtues	by Andrew Greeley
The Lilac Bus	by Maeve Binchy	The Firm	by John Grisham
Silver Wedding	by Maeve Binchy	A Time to Kill	by John Grisham
First Lady From Plains	by Rosalind Carter	Once in a Lifetime	by Constance Flannery
Prince of Peace	by James Carroll	The Book of Abraham	by Marek Halter
The Russia House	by John Le Carre	Mother Earth, Father Sky	by Sue Harrison
The Great Alone	by Janet Daily	Intensive Care	by Echo Heron
Sing to Me of Dreams	by Kathryn Davis	Through a Glass Darkly	by Karleen Koen
Too Deep for Tears	by Kathryn Davis	Lake Wobegone Days	by Garrison Keillor
Red, White and Blue	by John Dunne	The Irish	by Doris Ladd

Icarus Legend	by Robert Ludlam	Empty House	by Rosamond Pilcher
Heart of the Country	by Greg Matthews	Regets Only	by Sally Quinn
Dancing in the Light	by Shirley MacLaine	Tokaido Road	by Lucia Robson
Father and Son	by Peter Maas	Children of the Arbat	by Anatoli Rybakov
Kaffir Boy	by Mark Mathabane	The Endearment	by La Vyrle Spencer
Moving On	by Larry McMurtry	Message from Nam	by Danielle Steele
Creed for the Third Millenium	by Colleen McCullough	Wanderlust	by Danielle Steele
The Grass Crown	by Colleen McCullough	Thurston House	by Danielle Steele
Caribbean	by James Michner	Sands of Time	by Sidney Sheldon
Space	by James Michner	Windmills of the Gods	by Sidney Sheldon
Milagro Beanfield War	by John Nichols	She Who Remembers	by Linda Shuler
The Fourth K	by Mario Puzo	Joy Luck Club	by Amy Tan
Wise Guy	by Nicholas Pilegge	Accidental Tourist	by Anne Tyler
Harvest	by Belva Plain	Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant	by Anne Tyler
Golden Cup	by Belva Plain		
September	by Rosamand Pilcher	Lincoln	by Gore Vidal
Day of the Storm	by Rosamond Pilcher	In My Mother's House	by Elizabeth Winthrop
		Inside, Outside	by Herman Wouk